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COPY NO. 17

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
29 January 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Intelligence)
SUBJECT: Offshore Island Situation

General

Military activity in the off-shore island area continued to be relatively quiet. US and Nationalist commanders have been awaiting a go-ahead signal for the evacuation of the Tachens, according to a news report from Taipei datelined 29 January. 25X1

Tachens

On 27 January, eight Chinese Communist landing craft, three patrol craft and four sail junks were active in the Tachen area,

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Auth.:	HR 70-2
Date:	17 July 78
By:	

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according to a MAAG report. These vessels are believed to have been stepping up the supply of Communist forces on Ichang and other islands north of the Tachens, in what may be preparations for future attacks on the Tachens. Ichang could serve as a supply point as well as a staging area for such attacks.

Chinese Nationalists on the Tachens observed light signals and heard what sounded like mine explosions on Ching Hsu, a small island about two and a half miles to the northeast. On 27 January, a Nationalist patrol was dispatched to investigate, but found nothing. It is believed that a Communist patrol had set off flares and booby traps, previously set by the Nationalists, according to a MAAG report. This island, which is uninhabited, could be used as a Communist observation post.

Matsus

Negative.

Quemoys

On 28 January, a Chinese Nationalist patrol craft fired on about five Communist junks about four miles north of little Quemoy, according to a MAAG report. The Communist junks withdrew after retraining small caliber fire at the Nationalist ship.

Prospects for Cease-Fire

The press reports that the British ambassador in Moscow visited Molotov on 28 January to ask the USSR to urge Peiping, first, to avoid any steps which might lead to general hostilities and, second, to accept any invitation from the UN Security Council to discuss a cease-fire. The same message was reportedly delivered to the Peiping regime by the British charge there. New Zealand, reportedly with the support of the UK and US, has asked the UN Security Council to meet on Monday to discuss the question of hostilities in the China area and to consider inviting Peiping to be represented in the debate.

We have no information, other than press accounts, of US-UK efforts to arrange cease-fire discussions. Although Peiping's public position has consistently been that "liberation" of Nationalist-held territory is an internal affair in which no interference of any kind will be tolerated, Peiping's most recent comment on the possibility of UN action hinted at a willingness at least to discuss it. There seems to us a possibility

that Peiping will accept any UN invitation to do so, although it will not commit itself in advance on any modification of its position.

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